

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 97

Adopted in Senate April 17, 2008

Secretary of the Senate

Adopted in Assembly June 16, 2008

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

This resolution was received by the Secretary of State this
____ day of _____, 2008, at ____ o'clock ____M.

Deputy Secretary of State

RESOLUTION CHAPTER _____

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 97—Relative to Autism Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 97, Steinberg. Autism Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim April 2008 as Autism Awareness Month, would acknowledge the contributions made in the area of early autism and autism spectrum disorders intervention treatment, and would express its support for ASD programs and increased federal funding for these programs.

WHEREAS, Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) now impact one out of every 150 children in the United States and is the fastest growing serious developmental disability; and

WHEREAS, California has been the established leader in providing services and supports for the early identification, assessment, intervention, education, and treatment of individuals with ASD that began with the passage of landmark state legislation such as the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act of 1969 and Assembly Bill 3854 (1974, Burton), relating to autism and public education; and

WHEREAS, Parents and family members have made invaluable contributions through their commitment, caring, and advocacy to important advances in research, education, and treatment for individuals with ASD; and

WHEREAS, In 2005, Senator Perata authored Senate Concurrent Resolution 51 (Chapter 124, Stats. 2005) that established, with the support of Assembly Speaker Nunez and bipartisan backing, the Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on Autism, which is comprised of, among others, Senator Darrell Steinberg as chair, and Dr. Barbara Firestone, President and CEO of The Help Group, as vice chair, to identify gaps in programs and services related to the education and treatment of children, adolescents, transitional youth, and adults with ASD, and to provide recommendations that will contribute to the development of a comprehensive and integrated continuum of programs, services, and funding; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, Assembly Member Pavley authored Assembly Bill 2513 (Chapter 783, Stats. 2006), sponsored and supported by the California School Boards Association, California Association of Suburban School Districts, and the Association of California School Administrators, directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish the Superintendent's Autism Advisory Committee (SAAC), and required this multidisciplinary advisory group to develop recommendations by which public and nonpublic schools, including charter schools, can better serve pupils with autism and their parents; and

WHEREAS, The Budget Act of 2006 provided additional funding that expanded the ASD initiative to include additional professional training and development, state and regional ASD resource centers, expansion of ASD support staff, and the development, publication, and dissemination of "ASD: Best Practice Guidelines for Treatment and Interventions"; and

WHEREAS, The State Department of Developmental Services, the regional centers, the State Department of Education and local school districts, the State Department of Health Care Services, and the Centers for Autism Developmental Disabilities Research and Epidemiology (CADDRE) Network are committed to improving the quality of life for individuals with ASD; and

WHEREAS, The University of California, Davis M.I.N.D. Institute, launched in 1998 with inspiration from the parent community and funding from the California State Legislature, is now recognized internationally as a premier research institution that is advancing our knowledge of ASD and other neurodevelopmental disorders; and

WHEREAS, The University of California, Los Angeles and the University of California, San Diego are now both recognized as Autism Centers of Excellence by the National Institutes of Health and have each made significant contributions to the field; and

WHEREAS, The University of California, Santa Barbara is an acknowledged world leader in the early diagnosis and intervention of children with ASD; and

WHEREAS, The University of California, Riverside has launched the S.E.A.R.C.H. Program to help families find necessary resources for their children with ASD; and

WHEREAS, First 5 California has made the issue of autism for children who are five years of age and younger an important

priority, including the First 5 California Special Needs Project, which indicates that 19 percent of children suffer from developmental delays or disabilities that are frequently undetected by routine examinations during the first five years of life; and

WHEREAS, The Help Group, the Autism Society of America, Autism Speaks, Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT), Protection and Advocacy, Inc., and other nonprofit organizations contribute to the well-being of individuals with autism and their families; and

WHEREAS, Current scientific research has demonstrated that the early identification and intervention of children with ASD can result in significant positive outcomes in many children with ASD; and

WHEREAS, Public information and awareness efforts are of paramount importance in accelerating early identification efforts and the proliferation of early intervention programs and services; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature affirms its commitment to the important issues described in this resolution by declaring April 2008 as Autism Awareness Month in California and emphasizes that each and every individual with an ASD is a valued and important member of our society; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature recognizes and commends the parents and relatives of individuals with ASD for their sacrifice and dedication in providing for the special needs of individuals with ASD and for absorbing significant financial costs for specialized education and support services; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature supports the goal of increasing federal funding for basic and applied translational research to learn the root causes of autism and identify the best methods of early intervention and treatment, expand programs for individuals with autism across their lifespan, and promote understanding of the special needs of people with autism; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature continues to support the important work of the Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on Autism, the Superintendent's Autism Advisory Committee, The Help Group, the University of California, the First 5 California State and County Commission, Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT), Protection and Advocacy, Inc., the Autism Society of America,

Autism Speaks, the State Department of Health Care Services, Center for Autism Developmental Disabilities Research and Epidemiology (CADDRE) Network, the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and others as it relates to treatment and services for people with ASD; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature stresses the need to identify children with ASD and to begin early intervention services immediately after a child has been diagnosed with autism, and that those services, interventions, and supports for individuals with ASD, and their families, must be provided in an integrated, seamless, comprehensive, individually focused, and culturally competent manner, delivered across the child's lifespan; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the State Department of Developmental Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, the Area Boards for Developmental Disabilities, the State Department of Education, the Association of Regional Center Agencies, the University of California, Los Angeles, the Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission on Autism, the Superintendent's Autism Advisory Committee, the California School Boards Association, the California Association of Suburban School Districts, the Association of California School Administrators, The Help Group, the local chapters of the Autism Society of America, Autism Speaks, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, First 5 California State and County Commission, Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT), Protection and Advocacy, Inc., and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

Attest:

Secretary of State